

## BOEM Response to Hurricane Sandy: Progress on Recovery Assistance

In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy struck the East Coast, affecting millions of people, causing billions of dollars of destruction, and creating widespread environmental damage. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) was tapped along with partners at all levels of government to help restore coastlines and communities devastated by Hurricane Sandy. BOEM is one of many Federal agencies involved in the recovery. The BOEM Marine Minerals Program (MMP) is responsible for managing non-energy minerals (primarily sand and gravel) on the ocean floor, and is the only Federal program authorized to grant access to outer continental shelf (OCS) sand. As stewards of these resources, the bureau must ensure that the removal of any mineral resource is conducted in a safe and environmentally sound manner, and that any potentially adverse impacts on the marine, coastal, or human environments are avoided or minimized.



### Priorities

BOEM is committed to long-term recovery and resiliency of coastal areas damaged by Hurricane Sandy. The five primary aspects of the MMP's role in Hurricane Sandy recovery are to:

- participate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Disaster Recovery Framework;
- dedicate personnel to negotiate agreements for urgent coastal restoration projects;
- coordinate with stakeholders to ensure exchange of vital information;
- collaborate with state agencies to determine current and future OCS sand resource needs; and
- identify additional sand resource borrow areas.

BOEM has received \$13.6 million for Hurricane Sandy response – an initial \$11.7 million in May 2013 under the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013 for coastal resiliency studies and efforts, and \$1.9 million in December 2013 to conduct OCS sand resource evaluation, fund state cooperative agreements to increase coastal resiliency, and supplement broad scale environmental monitoring. The Act strengthened the bureau's ability to work with its partners to identify sand resources and ensure that appropriate work can be completed so sand is conveyed in a timely and environmentally responsible manner.

Since the announcement of the funding by Secretary of the Interior Jewell, BOEM has completed or begun several coastal restoration projects, and has awarded funds for environmental studies, including:




- [the completion of a beachfront restoration project on Sandbridge Beach, part of Virginia Beach, Va.](#), in May 2013, using 2.2 million cubic yards of OCS sand to help protect and restore natural areas as well as coastal infrastructure and communities;
- [an agreement with Brevard County, Fla., and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers \(USACE\)](#) to convey 2.4 million cubic yards of OCS sand to restore 14 miles of shoreline for Brevard County. Dredging began in November 2013;
- [\\$2 million in awards to the University of Florida and the Navy](#) for broad-scale environmental monitoring offshore Cape Canaveral, Brevard County, Fla. Monitoring began in October and is expected to conclude in April 2014. BOEM received an additional \$350,000 for bathymetric surveys, physical monitoring and other work for this study; and
- [an agreement with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration \(NASA\) and USACE](#) to renourish the beach and restore dunes on the Wallops Island Flight Facility shoreline in Virginia.

Discussions are ongoing with states and state agencies all along the Atlantic seaboard to collect data for increased resiliency planning.

- As of November 2013, BOEM received proposals for cooperative agreements from all 13 affected states.
- BOEM expects to announce projects for Florida, New Jersey, North Carolina and South Carolina in 2014.
- Program-wide, BOEM's planning for new Hurricane Sandy projects extends to 2016.
- Florida's southeast coast is in need of OCS sand. BOEM has been actively engaged with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and USACE to determine how best to manage the allocation of Federal sand resources to that region in the future.

Using funds from the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013, BOEM MMP staff has reached out to affected communities along the Atlantic coast, including:

- September 2013 meetings with the Northeast Sand Management Working Group in New Jersey and with the Florida Sand Management Working Group in Florida. The northeast meeting provided an opportunity to educate new stakeholders from New Jersey, Delaware and Massachusetts on the process for obtaining Federal sand resources to address Hurricane Sandy or future storms; in Florida, BOEM updated attendees on current projects. BOEM's Environmental Assessment and MMP staffs briefed stakeholders at the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association annual meeting in Texas in October 2013.
- BOEM is conducting outreach to Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island that was postponed due to the fall 2013 government shutdown.

BOEM is completing an Environmental Assessment that describes and evaluates the potential environmental impacts related to reasonably foreseeable geophysical and geological survey activities to identify and map sand resources in Federal waters along the Atlantic coast. For more information: see [www.BOEM.gov](http://www.BOEM.gov) and follow us @   .

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